

Summary of Feedback

May 8 Quarterly Contact Team Training on

Neighborhood Planning: Updating Plans Adopted Prior to Imagine Austin

May 15, 2014

Background and Meeting Overview

Planning and Development Review Department staff anticipates completing development of Neighborhood Plans within the core area identified by City Council in the next 2 years, and wants to identify a process for updating existing plans. Contact Teams will play a key role in refining the process.

At the Neighborhood Plan Contact Team Quarterly Training on May 8, 2014, staff made a brief presentation and had an initial discussion with attendees. In particular, attendees of the training were asked to provide feedback on:

- The **criteria** that should be used to decide which plans to update first
- The **planning process** that should be used to update plans once they are selected for update

The presentation is available at:

ftp://ftp.ci.austin.tx.us/npzd/Austingo/Proposed_NPUpdate_Process.pdf

The following Neighborhood Plan Contact Teams were represented at the Quarterly Training:

- Central West Austin, Chestnut, Coronado Hills, East MLK Combined, East Riverside/Oltorf, North Lamar Georgian Acres, Southeast Combined, South Congress Combined, Windsor Park

Questions + Responses

- **When will the City begin to update adopted neighborhood plans?**
PDRD anticipates having staff resources to update existing Neighborhood Plans after completion of neighborhood plans for areas in the vicinity of North Burnet Road. Currently, staff expects that these plans would be completed by 2016 at the latest.
- **How long will it take to update adopted neighborhood plans?**
An individual plan update process is expected to take from 12-16 months but could take longer depending on the geographic scope and level of complexity of the area. The length of time it would take to update all existing neighborhood plans would depend on staff resources, which would determine how many plans could be undertaken at any

given time, as well as whether planning areas are further consolidated into combined planning areas.

- **How does the CodeNEXT process impact neighborhood plan updates?**

A separate, independent process called “CodeNEXT” is currently underway to update the Austin Land Development Code. At its anticipated conclusion in 2016, this process will result in a new set of land development regulations for the City as well as a new Zoning Map which applies the new regulations to individual parcels.

The *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan* and its attached adopted neighborhood plans and their Future Land Use Maps provide the overarching policy and planning framework that is implemented through the regulations of the Austin Land Development Code. While the available regulatory tools may change through the revision, these plans will continue to set the over-arching policy.

Similar to the neighborhood plans being developed in South Austin and along Burnet Road, Neighborhood Plans that are updated while the CodeNEXT process is underway will not be accompanied by changes to the existing Zoning Map, but will continue to include a Future Land Use Map, and will provide essential policy guidance for the area that can be used to identify and apply appropriate regulations through the CodeNEXT process.

- **How will the switch to a 10-1 City Council impact neighborhood plan updates?**

The switch to a district-based City Council will likely have significant impacts on City decision making and policy direction going forward. PDRD is responsible for performing neighborhood planning duties, and will continue to work to develop a recommended approach for updating neighborhood plans, unless we receive alternate direction from the City Manager. Before any plan update process or new plan is initiated, staff will request formal initiation from City Council, and we anticipate that the new 10-1 Council will be seated prior to the first request for initiating a Neighborhood Plan Update.

- **How will planning be accomplished outside of the boundaries covered by existing neighborhood plans?**

PDRD staff anticipates conducting additional long range planning work beyond the boundaries covered by existing neighborhood plans. This future planning will likely focus on supporting the Centers and Corridors identified on the Imagine Austin Growth Concept, or addressing other significant planning needs outside of the Core. This planning may be accomplished through new neighborhood plans, corridor or center-specific planning, or boundary expansions to existing neighborhood plans as appropriate. As described above, staff will request formal initiation from City Council

before developing new neighborhood plans.

- **How will plan amendments be handled? Will plan amendments be impacted by neighborhood plan updates?**

Plan amendment requests to existing plans from property owners, contact teams, and others will continue to be accepted based on the amendment cycle described in City Code. Neighborhood Plan Contact teams that have particular text changes they would like to make to their plans prior to a major plan update may request those changes through the amendment process if they comply with the amendment parameters described in City Code and on the plan amendment application. Neighborhood Plan Contact Teams and others will continue to be able to request amendments to Updated plans based on the amendment cycle described in City Code.

Feedback on Possible Criteria for Selecting Plans to Update

Contact Teams

- A Contact Team's desire to update the Plan should factor significantly into the criteria. Options discussed:
 - Initiate plan updates based on Contact Team requests (i.e. have some sort of application process for plan updates);
 - Look at whether a Contact Team has previously asked to update their plan;
 - Ask Contact Teams whether they would like to update their plan and prioritize plan updates in part based on their response;
- Ensure that selection process is transparent and that Contact Teams have adequate information about how Neighborhood Plans were selected for update.
- Involve Contact Teams in the weighting of selection criteria.

Timing of CodeNEXT and 10-1

- Wait until 10-1 has been implemented to begin process of selecting Neighborhood Plans for update.
- Wait until CodeNEXT has been implemented to begin process of selecting Neighborhood Plans for update.

Planning Area Characteristics

- Evaluate infrastructure needs by neighborhood planning area and prioritize planning areas with greater infrastructure needs.
- If prioritizing Plans based on the presence of planning and infrastructure synergies, make sure to include State owned lands in this analysis.
- Prioritize Planning Areas based on the existence of Transit Corridors and organize plan updates in ways that allow planning to occur on both sides of a corridor.

- Consider expanding planning boundaries to include geography outside of the core, if appropriate.
- Prioritize older plans. Austin is changing fast.
- Prioritize areas that are undergoing change.
- If a plan is still valid but hasn't been fully implemented, put City focus on advancing implementation rather than updating plan.
- Use Imagine Austin Growth Concept map to prioritize updates.

Criteria Weighting/Matrix

- Develop an objective, quantitative method for prioritizing plan updates, through:
 - Developing a selection matrix,
 - Quantifying criteria; and/or
 - Developing a sorting/selection algorithm
- Establish weighting for various criteria (i.e. Contact Team interest is more important than age of plan, etc)
- Establish a point system

Feedback on the Planning Process

10-1

- 10-1 may shift priorities for planning process, need to be ready to adapt process.

CodeNEXT

- Consider how the results of the CodeNEXT Community Character in a box can be used in the neighborhood planning process to avoid asking folks to do a similar exercise over again.

Participation and Outreach

- Control input to the process so that weight is given to those who live or own property in the area
- Control or exclude input from groups or individuals who are not residents or property owners in the NP
- Use a process similar to the one that was used by the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to gather data from Contact Teams and neighborhood groups
- Collect Data – Include HOA's & NA's for more detailed information within the neighborhood
- Ensure that process is iterative and includes feedback loops with the community

- Phase One Community Surveys – Allow for write in feedback not just fill in the bubble to our questions
- Community Outreach, Yay!

Contact Team

- Rely on the Contact Team to play an active role in the process, including:
 - Space for NPCT (not staff) to lead discussions
 - Relying on people on the ground to assess the current conditions
 - Taking a bottom up approach
- Provide an active role for Contact Teams in Phase 2 and 3 (Plan Assessment and Complete Communities Analysis), especially in interpreting the implications of Imagine Austin within the Neighborhood Plan area

General Process

- Use CAN's Methodology of Community self-assessments, rather than staff doing the assessing/analyzing
- Planning synergies should include State of Texas properties
- Conduct analysis of infrastructure needs and capacity as part of planning process

Preliminary PDRD Staff Response and Next Steps

PDRD staff invites Contact Team representatives to provide additional input about the criteria and process that should be used to update existing neighborhood plans. Additional input should be provided to: Mark Walters, mark.walters@austintexas.gov.

While several comments suggested that we should consider delaying this work until CodeNEXT is completed, or until the new 10-1 Council is seated, at this point PDRD staff does not recommend a delay in our work to identify a process.

PDRD staff will consider all input received, and will develop a refined proposal for selecting neighborhood plans for update that incorporates the input where feasible. PDRD staff will also develop a proposed outline for the update process based on the input received. (Note: The update process would be further refined on a planning area by planning area basis prior to initiation of a Plan Update.) We anticipate presenting the proposed criteria and process to Neighborhood Contact Teams for review and feedback at a future meeting.

What can Neighborhood Plan Contact Teams do now?

While we don't yet know how we will select plans for update or all the specifics of the update process, Contact Teams can do several things now to get ready:

- 1) Review the presentation and this summary and provide additional input to PDRD staff on how plans should be selected and what the process should look like.
- 2) Continue to stay engaged in the CodeNEXT process.
- 3) Review the Imagine Austin Plan and their Adopted Neighborhood Plan and begin to identify significant issues that should be tackled during a future plan update.
- 4) Begin to assess community interest in updating their Neighborhood Plan.